

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: EAIR MILI SNAR CU
SUBJ: CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT IN CUBAN AIR SPACE

1. SUMMARY: USINT, IN LAST WEEK, HAS BEEN NOTIFIED OF TWO UNAUTHORIZED ENTRIES BY US CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT INTO EITHER CUBAN TERRITORIAL AIR SPACE OF EXTRATERRITORIAL AIR DEFENSE IDENTIFICATION ZONE. BOTH US AIRCRAFT WERE INTERCEPTED BY CUBAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT. IN YET ANOTHER CASE, CUBANS STATE THAT A US CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT ARRIVED IN CUBA, ESCORTED BY CUBAN (PRESUMABLY MILITARY) AIRCRAFT, AFTER US AIRPLANE'S FUEL RAN LOW. WHILE USINT IS GRATEFUL FOR PROMPT INFORMATION FROM CUBANS ON THESE INCIDENTS (AND HELP IN LATTER CASE), WE ARE PREOCCUPIED THAT SERIOUS ACCIDENT MAY OCCUR AS RESULT OF THESE INTERCEPTIONS. IN ADDITION, WE ARE AWARE THAT US PRIVATE AIRCRAFT TRANSITS MAY HAVE CONNECTION WITH NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING INTO US. WE RECOMMEND THAT FAA CIRCULATE ADVISORY BULLETIN CAUTIONING UNAUTHORIZED US CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT TO AVOID CUBAN TERRITORIAL AIRSPACE AND ITS ENVIRONS. END SUMMARY.

2. USINT, JULY 5, RECEIVED MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS (MINREX) NOTE 1202 DATED JUNE 30 STATING THAT ON JUNE 28 A CESSNA 182 P AIRCRAFT, REGISTRY NUMBER N 52795, AT 1317 LOCAL TIME ENTER CUBAN "ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENSE IDENTIFICATION
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ZONE" (ZIDA-OUTSIDE TERRITORIAL AIRSPACE), WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION, NORTH OF CAYOS DE BUENA VISTA, PINAR DEL RIO PROVINCE. AIRCRAFT CONTINUED SOME 250 KILOMETERS THROUGH ZIDA EXITING NORTH OF GUANABO AT 1410 HOURS. AIRCRAFT WAS INTERCEPTED BY CUBAN AIR FORCE AT 1349 LOCAL TIME 80 KILOMETERS NORTH OF BAHIA HONDA. CUBAN AIR FORCE BROKE CONTACT 110 KILOMETERS NORTH OF GUANABO WHEN US AIRCRAFT EXITED

ZONE IN NORTHWEST DIRECTION.

3. ON JULY 1 (SEE HAVANA 1864), USINT WAS ADVISED ORALLY BY MINREX THAT US CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT, REGISTRY NUMBER N9533Q, ENTERED CUBAN AIRSPACE AT 1244 LOCAL TIME. US AIRPLANE WAS INTERCEPTED BY CUBAN AIR FORCE REPROTEDELY IN CUBAN TERRITORIAL AIRSPACE ABOUT 80 TO 90 KILOMETERS EAST OF SANTA CLARA CITY. US PILOT IGNORED CUBAN SIGNALS TO LAND, BUT CUBANS PERMITTED AIRCRAFT TO DEPART UNSCATHED.

4. ON JUNE 29, US CESSNA 177 AIRCRAFT, REGISTRY NUMBER N3211T, ARRIVED AT HAVANA SHORT OF FUEL. CESSNA (ACCORDING TO MINREX NOTE 1223 DATED JUNE 30) WAS ESCORTED BY CUBAN (PRESUMABLY MILITARY) AIRCRAFT TO LANDING POINT, AFTER INITIAL INTERCEPTION SOME 80 KILOMETERS NORTH OF MARIEL. (SEE HAVANA 1865 AND PREVIOUS.)

5. BEGIN COMMENT: WE ARE CONCERNED THAT CUBAN MILITARY INTERCEPTIONS OF UNAUTHORIZED CIVILAIN FLIGHTS (THAT IS, UNCLEARED FLIGHTS OUT OF NORMAL CORRIDORS), ALBEIT AT TIMES IN NOMINALLY INTERNATIONAL AIRSPACE) WILL LEAD TO ACCIDENTS. AT SAME TIME, WE ARE AWARE THAT SOME NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS EITHER ERR INTO, OR CONSCIOUSLY CHOOSE TO HUG OR TRANSGRESS, CUBAN AIRSPACE TO AVOID DETECTION BY US AUTHORITIES. US WOULD BE WELL SERVED IF BOTH: A) INNOCENT CIVILIAN AVIATORS WERE URGED TO AVOID POSSIBLE DANGER OF UNAUTHORIZED FLIGHTS NEAR CUBA AND B) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS WERE PLACED ON NOTICE THAT CIVILIAN AIR TRAFFIC

NEAR AND OVER CUBA WOULD BE MINIMAL AND HIGHLY NOTICEABLE. IF IT IS FEASIBLE, THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND THAT FAA ISSUE BULLETIN CAUTIONING CIVIL AVIATORS AGAINST FLIGHTS OVER AND IN IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF CUBA.

6. THIS ACTION VIS-A-VIS US CIVILIAN AVIATORS IS INDEPENDENT OF WHATEVER ACTION WE MAY TAKE ON CUBAN PRETENSIONS CONCERNING THEIR EXTRA-TERRITORIAL "ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENSE IDENTIFICATION ZONE". (SEE HAVANA 1278 TO WHICH NO REPLY YET RECEIVED.)
END COMMENT.
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